RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday the 1th January, 1991 /l *1th Pausu,* 1912 *(Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the clock Mr. **Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 141.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, we want to raise an important issue.

SHRl V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, It is an important issue regarding Tamil Nadu. *(Interruptions)* Tha Tribunal has rejected the claim for in. terim award for Tamil Nadu to release water to Tami] Nadu... ^*Interruptions)*

SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: iir we want water. Water, water verywhere but not for the poor riculturists of Tamil Nadu. ' *'rruptions)*

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: SirDMK Government have not caredI out the issue relating to the interim**yard.** For their fault, the farmersTamil Nadu should not suffer. The tire crop will wither away. *(. Inter.ptions)* It is a national issue. If"*"* water is not released by Karna-ka. the entire crop will perish.

, *'ntemiptions)*

SHRI K. G. MAHESHWARAPPA: Br, should we interfere; n the pro. ceedings of the Tribunal? The Tribunal has no jurisdiction to pass an interim order. *(Tntbmtftti ons)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is Question Hour, (interruptions) Question No. . 141. *(Interruptions)* You have made : your po'... " Question No. 141.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: The P'-'-ne Minister of this country should intervene to release water. Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seats. Question Hour has precedence over everything else Question No. 141.

(Interruptions;

SHRl M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: That matter is before the Tribunal. The Tribunal...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a procedure in the House. You do it after the Question Hour. *(Interruptions)* Let us follow the rules and procedures. *(Interruptions)* There is a pro-cedure. I am not going to stop you. You follow the procedure. *(Interruption)* You have made your point. If you want to discuss more, you follow the procedure. There is a procedure. You follow the procedure. Let it be done according to rules and procedure. Question No, 141.

Death of a passenger at Dabollin airport, Goa

*141. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a passenger died recently by falling out from a door of an Indian Airlines plane at Dabollin airport, Goa,

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted into the matter; and

(c) whether any compensation has been paid to the next of kin of the deceased and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An enquiry has been ordered by the DGCA under Rule 77(C) of the Indian Aircraft Rules.

(c) Indin Airlines will pay the maximum permissible compensation of Rs. 5. 00 lakhs to the member$_s$ of the family of the deceased passenger.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES; Sir, we can understand the anxiety of the Government to have grounded the Airbus 320 in the name of public safety: but the Indian Airlines seem to be very careless toward^ public safety on the ground. From the reply of the hon. Minister, we can eee that there was callousness on the part of the staff. May I know from the hon. Minister what action he contemplates to evolve a mechanism to bring better coordination between the air crew and ground staff and whether any such directive has been issued since then.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Already provisions are there according to which the ladder operator has to operate under certain conditions. He has to go up and ask the cabin crew that he is removing the ladder whereupon the cabin crew will close the door, and in case it is not possible, he has put the strap. Here, of course, there has been a laxity at Goa and a passenger died. Therefore, we own the responsibility and we have reiterated that instructions should be strictly followed.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Hon. Minister has mentioned in his reply that enquiry is being conducted by the Director General of Civil Avia tion. I fee] this is against the law of natural justice because the fault is on the part of the Indian Airlines and I don't think they should themselves conduct this enquiry. I want to know whether the Minister contemplates any change in the rules to see that there is an independent enquiry authority appointed for the purpose.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: As per rules we have already ordered an enquiry and the enquiry report is expected in the next two weeks.

SHRl JOHN F. FERNANDES: I asked whether the Minister contemplates a change in the rules because this is against natural justice. When the airlines staff are involved in the case, they cannot themselves enquire into the matter.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Existing aircraft rules provide for an enquiry under such circumstances, and we have followed those rules. An enquiry has been ordered and. we are expecting the enquiry report in the next to w^ieks, and we will bring it to you.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Last night I was travelling from Hydera-to Delhi by A-320. After emplaning, there was a power failure after 15 minutes in the plane and the doors could not be opened even for want of power. After 20 minutes or 30 minutes or an hour, all the passengers were asked to get down and they had to wait for two hours because another aircraft was commissioned from Madras and we were asked to get in. This is the third time m the last seven days at Hyderabad that due to some failure or another, A-320 aircraft could not be operated. I want to know what steps the Government is taking in that regard. Hydraulic failure is a regular feature and the passengers on board A-320 have anxious moments; and they are not sure of reaching their destination safely. In view of these developments. I want to know what the Government pro, poses to do as far as A-320 aircraft is concerned, to ensure security and safety of passengers.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Though this is not related to the main question, I will look into the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRl A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, though he is an efficient Minister, I want to bring to his notice the total inefficiency in the Indian Airlines. Therefore, I would request him to use his efficiency in improving things in the Indan Airlines. What I would like to know is,..

MR, CHAIRMAN: Your suggestion he has followed.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: He has just now said. It was said that after the reinduction of the A-320 aircraft, things like delays would be sorted out. But they are still not. Would he please accept my suggestion? Sir, there are old and emotional passengers like me and there are young like him. You can just... *(Interruptions)*

DR. BAPU KALDATE. There are inbetweens also.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Will it be possible for you, Mr. Minister to do like they do in foreign countries? In foreign countries, when a flight is delayed, they announce why it is late and how much it is late. Here, nobody says why it is late. Only God knows. The passengers are just not informed. The passenger should be at least told the reason so that there, can be solace to his own soul.

MR. CHAIRMAN: SoIaca 1_0 his soul?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI; The second thing is,, while coming from Bombay...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He 'wil! look into your soulful plea.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, you are an authority on the Vedas and the soul. You can better advise him.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: He should accompany you.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Thank you very much.

Sir, the point is, there are three things which need the Minister's attention. These are: complette ineffl. ciency, total lack of maintenance and the arrogance of the staff who serve the passengers. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Come to your question.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: I entered a plane after a delay of two hours. Okay. I did not mind. I entered the plane. Again, there was another delay of thirty minutes. This sort of thing disturb the passengers. *(Interruptions,)*

MR. CHAIRMAN; He is mentioning how the planes are delayed and thereby he is delaying the other supplementaries. This is a demonstration. *(Interruptions)*

SHRl G. G. SWELL: Half. an-our Discussion.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: They should announce why there is delay so that we will be safe. Sometimes, the tyre gets flat. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G. G. SWELL: This is Question Hour, not Half-an-hour Discussion.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI; 1 am asking the question. Why do you inter, rupt?

DR. BAPU KALDATE: Mr. Kulkarni, you should address the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kulkarni, you are such a veteran. You are doing like this.

SHRl A. G. KULKARNI: We have lost all the systems.

MR. CHAIRMAN; You are also trying to add to it.

SHRl A. G. KULKARNI: Now, I come to the serious part. *(Interruptions)* There has been disturbance even from you, Sir. You ask questions. The point is. when a tyre gets flat, it means there is no n roper main. tenance and in such cases preeauhon should be taken not to allow th« passengers to enter. Therefore, as I said, the efficiency of the maintenance staff, the crew and others who serve the passengers has to be totally im--proved. Will you please do something in this regard?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir though what the hon. Member has said is not relevant to the question which was asked, still..

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will take care.

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: The hon. Member asked a question about the efficiency in the Indian Airlines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has also praised you.

SHRl HARMOHAN DHAWAN: I must admit that before becoming a Minister, I had the same feelings which he has. Therefore, I am better equipped now to rectify all these aberrations which exist rigtn now. For his information and for the infor mation of the other hon. Members, I would like to point out that we have created a Cell in the Ministry where we monitor the activities of the vari- various airlines under the control of my Ministry in respect of three parametres. One is, punctuality. Every Friday, the Chief Executives of all the airlines meet and we monitor the punctuality of each flight. Secondly, the seat-load factor is also monitored. Thirdly flight efficiency also moni tored. Then, customer service is an other very important thing with us right now. We try to improve the services in the airlines. So far as house-keeping, food catering, are con. cerned various measures have already been taken. We have already intro duced new type of food on various routes from Delhi Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad. It has already been introduced and the quality of food and representation part is definitely improved. Our endeavour will be to further improve the services. *(Interruptions).* I can tell you that whatever short time may be a performance of two to three months is going to be performance of 11 months.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TR1VEDI: Sir, the Indian civil aviation is really passing through a critical phase as far as safety is concerned. [am terribjy worried and nervous about it. The bulls, the cattle are entering the runway. The doors are opening midway and the passengers are falling irom the aircraft. This is not funny.

SHRl HARMOHAN DHAWAN: It has not happened in one month only.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: I am not at all blaming you. I am just telling what the situation is today and it is not very funny. My'report cays that when this passenger fell from the aircraft there were no doctors to attend on him. The two foreign coupled who happend to be passengers attended on this particular passenger who fell. There was no ambu. lance to carry this passenger. Ulti- mately, if my report is correct, this passenger was carried in a jeep. I fail to understand why these things are happening. I squarely lay the blame at the footstep of DGCA. Various crashes have taken place. (Time *Bell rings)* My question Is two-fold. Firstly, are we going to have a very hard and serious look at the working of the DGCA intself because there is too must of *bhavbhandi?*

There is a lot of hush up. My question is, are we going to have an enquiry into the working of the DGCA? Secondly, as far as step ladder is concerned, there is. particular advice that we must have a hooter. The तो अपन ही आदमी हैं इनको मारो, इनको छोड़ो।

moment the step ladder is taken out^ the hooter system should be introduced so that people know that there is some danger in the vicinity and they should keep away from that. Would the Ministry of Civil Aviation let me know whether these two suggestions would be taken serious note of or not?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Sir, the passenger Martin Barrat died and

it is most unfortunate. [had already said that we take the responsibility. It is the negligence or carelessness either of the operator of the ladder or of the cabin crew, but the responsibility is ours. The inquiry is instituted and we are expecting a report within 2 weeks' time. Then we will come to know who was responsible. We have taken a serious view of it and whatever norms have been laid down we are trying to enforce them strictly. This is what I can assure the House,

Regarding DGCA I agree with the hon. Member that the available skel-ton service that is with the DGCA we are trying to strengthen it further. Various measures have been taken to see that the DGCA functions in an efficient manner.

SHRl DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Are you going to have an enquiry into the working of the DGCA?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: I don't think it is needed.

SHRl SANTOSH BAGRODIA: From the reply it appears and he has very much accepted that the fault lies with the Indian Airlines. The first thing is, is he going to be paid Rs. 5 lakhs immediately, before the inquiry is over? But that is not the major issue. I have been writing to this Ministry even before the hon. Minister came to power that the step ladders are working very inefficient, ly. Even while taking off at Delhi Airport itself the step ladder i_n the rear side is taken off just about 15-20 minutes ahead of the time. Even the children and the old people have to travel from the front gate all the way till the last. Similarly, when we land at Jaipur at 10. 30 or 11. 30, both the gates are not opened. Step ladders are not provided at both the places. Normally, the practice is that the step ladders should be provided at both the places not only for comfort but for security a'so. Will the honourable Minister ensure that step-lad. ders are provided at both the places very carefully and no step-ladder is taken off till all the passengers boarded or disembarked? While on the question of safety and security, is it true that fitness certificates to pilots are given as a ritual, without any actual test, due to some carelessness and also because of objections by pilots and, if so, what steps are you taking to avoid such things regularly? Finally, Sir, wheel-chairs are normally not available for more than one. About two or three days back I myself tried for a wheel-chair for a passenger at the Delhi airport. There were two passengers and only one wheel-chair was provided, and one passenger had to go very 3 lowly. Even lifting of the passenger into the plane is done by the wheel-chair only and there is no lifting chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You ha^e made your point clear.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA So, will the honourable Minister provide these?

SHRI HARMOHAN DHAWAN: Sir, I have already given the answer to what the honourable Member has pointed out. Regarding compensation, our legal advisers have already tried, twice, to contact the members of the family of th$_e$ deceased, but contact could not be established, ivry effort is that this issue should be settled as early as possible. We have given instructions to the Department to contact the members of the family of the deceased and pay the money as quickly as possible. Regarding the ladder. I have already answered that question. About wheelchairs, I will definitely try to improve what the honourable Member has suggested.

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM REPUBLIC OF KOREA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I have an announcement to make.